



Chanel

Gabrielle Bonheur "Coco" Chanel (19 August 1883 – 10 January 1971) was a French fashion designer, Nazi spy, and businesswoman. The founder and namesake of the Chanel brand, she was credited in the post-World War I era with liberating women from the constraints of the "corseted silhouette" and popularizing a sporty, casual chic as the feminine standard of style. A prolific fashion creator, Chanel extended her influence beyond couture clothing, realizing her design aesthetic in jewellery, handbags, and fragrance. Her signature scent, Chanel No. 5, has become an iconic product. She is the only fashion designer listed on Time magazine's list of the 100 most influential people of the 20th century. Chanel herself designed her famed interlocked-CC monogram, which has been in use since the 1920s.

Battle for control of Parfums Chanel

On 17 May 1947, Chanel received wartime profits from the sale of **Chanel No. 5**, in an amount equivalent to some nine million dollars in twenty-first century valuation. Her future share would be two percent of all Chanel No. 5 sales worldwide. The financial benefit to her would be enormous. Her earnings were projected at \$25 million a year, making her at the time **one of the richest women in the world**. In addition, Pierre Wertheimer agreed to an unusual stipulation proposed by Chanel herself. Wertheimer agreed to pay all of Chanel's living expenses—from the trivial to the large—for the rest of her life.



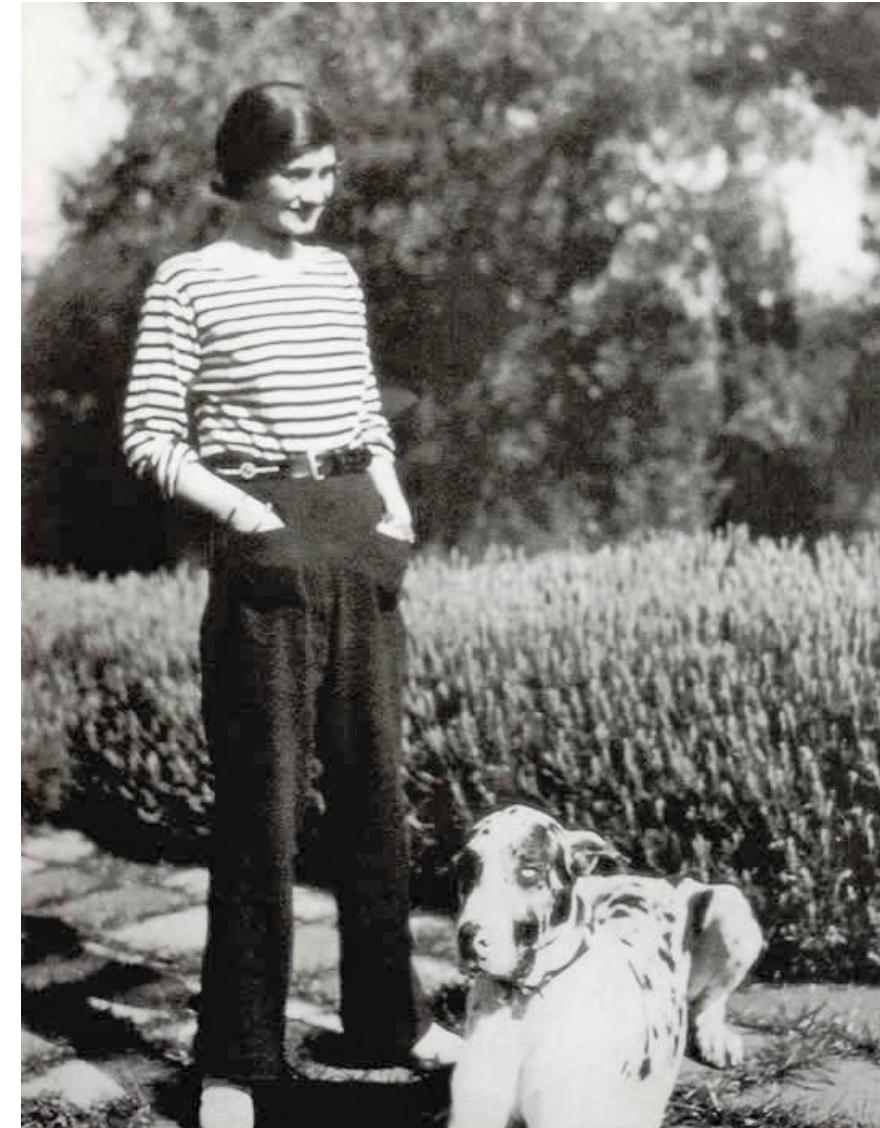
Chanel had begun designing hats

while living with Balsan, initially as a diversion that evolved into a commercial enterprise. She became a licensed milliner in 1910 and opened a boutique at 21 rue Cambon, Paris, named Chanel Modes. As this location already housed an established clothing business, Chanel sold only her millinery creations at this address.

Chanel's millinery career bloomed once theatre actress Gabrielle Dorziat wore her hats in Fernand Nozière's play *Bel Ami* in 1912. Subsequently, Dorziat modelled Chanel's hats again in photographs published in *Les Modes*.



As early as 1915, Harper's Bazaar raved over Chanel's designs: "The woman who hasn't at least one Chanel is hopelessly out of fashion ... This season the name Chanel is on the lips of every buyer. Chanel's ascendancy was the official deathblow to the corseted female silhouette. The frills, fuss, and constraints endured by earlier generations of women were now passé; under her influence gone were the "aigrettes, long hair, hobble skirts. Her design aesthetic redefined the fashionable woman in the post World War I era. The Chanel trademark look was of youthful ease, liberated physicality, and unencumbered sportive confidence.



Chanel wearing a sailor's jersey and trousers, 1928



Three jersey outfits by Chanel, March 1917

